



Standard Project Report 2015

World Food Programme in Armenia, Republic of (AM)

Development of Sustainable School Feeding

Reporting period: 1 January - 31 December 2015

Project Information	
Project Number	200128
Project Category	Development Project
Overall Planned Beneficiaries	75,500
Planned Beneficiaries in 2015	75,500
Total Beneficiaries in 2015	68,544

Key Project Dates	
Project Approval Date	June 09, 2010
Planned Start Date	July 01, 2010
Actual Start Date	September 23, 2010
Project End Date	June 30, 2017
Financial Closure Date	N/A

Approved budget in USD	
Food and Related Costs	15,690,740
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	1,890,970
Direct Support Costs	5,486,132
Cash-Based Transfers and Related Costs	N/A
Indirect Support Costs	1,614,749
Total	24,682,590

Commodities	Metric Tonnes
Planned Commodities in 2015	2,883
Actual Commodities 2015	2,676
Total Approved Commodities	16,787

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COUNTRY OVERVIEW



Country Background

Armenia is a lower-middle-income, food-deficit country, highly vulnerable to global price hikes and dependent on food imports. Border closures with neighbouring Turkey and Azerbaijan since Armenia's independence in 1991 have constrained economic development within this landlocked state. A rising state debt and slowdown of economic growth has strained the government budget, hindering implementation of adequate social safety nets, reducing investment in the education sector to just 2.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and in health to a mere 1.5 percent. Some 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line with regional disparities further exacerbating inequalities in access to basic social, health care and education services. Armenia ranks 85 out of 188 in the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index, 62 out of 155 on the Gender Inequality Index and suffers from deepening income inequalities year after year.

The country is highly impacted by climate change and is prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes. The government is making efforts to enhance response capacity. Repeated exposure to natural disasters has caused significant economic losses and adversely impacted food security. A joint Central Asia and Caucasus Disaster Risk Management Initiative and World Bank study in 2009, estimated that in any given year, there is a 20 percent chance that a major disaster will result in losses of more than 12 percent of GDP. Since 2014, geopolitical risk has been rising, with a sharp escalation of truce violations across the line of contact with Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. Bordering villages of Armenia's north-eastern Tavush province are frequent targets of increasingly heavy fire, incurring not only physical damage but also civilian casualties.

Progress toward poverty and hunger reduction remains below the global average improvement rate. While consumption poverty fell by 2 percentage points in 2014, the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) increased from 16.2 to 17.7 percent. Deprivation of education (years of schooling and school attendance) and health (child mortality and nutrition) accounted for 90 percent of the MPI. Economic growth was recorded at 3.4 percent in 2014 against the projected 5.2 percent, and is expected to decline further.

While the school enrollment rate is generally high, the country has failed to meet four out of five national targets toward achieving universal primary education. There is an alarming trend of declining enrolment and increasing dropout rates from schools, especially from upper grades (27.6 percent). The proportion of students who completed primary school and reached grade 5 has declined steadily since 2005 (from 98 to 93 percent), with a dropout rate reaching 7 percent in 2013. This is mostly attributed to deteriorating social conditions prompting a sharp drop in the share of expenditure allocated to education from total household expenditure, from 4.2 percent in 2008 to just 0.5 percent in 2014.

According to the findings of the latest 2010 Demographic and Health Survey, Armenia suffers from a double burden of malnutrition, with the prevalence of stunting among children under 5 at 19.3 percent and overweight at 17 percent. In some provinces, stunting peaks at 37 percent while child poverty reaches 50 percent. Poverty, unemployment, and a lack of social inclusion have been major contributing factors in a recent drive toward outward migration.

Summary Of WFP Assistance

WFP introduced development project (DEV 200128) in 2010 providing school meals in the most food insecure areas, gradually increasing the coverage throughout all provinces in Armenia. The project underwent a number of operational changes for the benefit of beneficiaries, not only increasing the number of children receiving meals but also improving the nutrition composition of the food basket and increasing the entitlement. WFP provided school meals to 67,000 primary school children accounting for approximately half of the student population in grades 1-4, and distributed take-home entitlements to 1,700 kitchen helpers involved in the daily preparation of school meals.

As a result of the latest approved one-year extension, WFP's school feeding development project has been extended to June 2017. From the 2015-2016 school year, which started in September, the number of students was adjusted to 60,000 reflecting the gradual hand over to the government. Following the first handover of two provinces last year, a third one, Ararat, was taken over by the government in January 2015. The national programme is reaching out to all 21,500 primary school children in the three provinces.

WFP's continued collaboration with its capacity development partner, the Social and Industrial Food Services Institute (SIFI), and a school feeding inter-ministerial committee resulted in enhanced government ownership of a sustainable national school meals programme. Implementation under the national programme improved due to the provision of basic kitchen equipment in schools in the three regions taken over from WFP.

WFP has been consistently acting on recommendations from the February 2015 Mid-Term Evaluation. Strategic and operational partnerships were built with United Nations Agencies and initiatives taken to move toward home-grown school feeding.

The government's cash contribution toward the WFP administered project's internal transport, storage and handling expenditure continued to be utilised through the WFP trust fund.

WFP's project is in line with the Zero Hunger Challenge and Armenia's Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2.

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	850	850	1,700
Children (5-18 years)	32,407	28,535	60,942
Adults (18 years plus)	3,153	2,749	5,902
Total number of beneficiaries in 2015	36,410	32,134	68,544

Distribution (mt)						
Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Development Project	2,327	134	215	0	0	2,676
Total Food Distributed in 2015	2,327	134	215	0	0	2,676

OPERATIONAL SPR

Operational Objectives and Relevance

WFP launched DEV 200128 in September 2010 to support the food security and education of children affected in the aftermath of the 2009 global economic crisis through provision of school meals in primary schools, and to support the government in their gradual shift from a WFP-supported to a sustainable nationally owned school feeding programme through provision of technical assistance and capacity enhancement. Nutritious meals and fruit bars were provided to children in primary schools to: 1) improve their daily food intake and learning performance, and 2) increase their regular attendance and retention.

Aligned with WFP's Strategic Objectives 3 and 4 the project is contributing to prevention of child hunger and poverty and is promoting children's rights to education, nutrition and health.

In its sixth year of implementation, the school feeding project remained highly relevant as more than one-third of the population lives below the poverty line. The lingering effects of the 2008-2009 global economic crisis are still visible in the Armenian economy, with limited progress made toward poverty reduction and inclusive growth. The Gini index at 31.5 since 2009, reveals a persisting inequality gap between either ends of the socio-economic spectrum.

Although poverty decreased by 2 percent in 2014, in large parts of Armenia the population are unable to meet their daily food requirements. Malnutrition remains high, with almost 20 percent of children under five stunted, which can be partly attributed to poor dietary diversity and annual food shortages. This places Armenia close to medium public health significance according to WHO thresholds.

The project is aligned with the Armenia Development Strategy 2014-2025, focusing on human capital development and improvement of social protection systems and the 2016-2020 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) pillars, namely: I) Equitable, Sustainable Economic Development and Poverty Reduction and III) Social Services and Inclusion. The project was implemented in accordance with a Development Project Action Plan, which was signed between WFP and the Ministry of Education and Science in 2011.

Results

Beneficiaries, Targeting and Distribution

WFP implemented school meals activities in 7 provinces reaching beneficiaries close to planned. The lower proportion of girl beneficiaries compared to boys were based on the population demographics. The project targeted primary school students from grades 1- 4 and kitchen helpers who prepared and served meals in the schools. A brief delay in the arrival of peas in-country postponing project implementation, and the closure of all schools in the second half of March due to a spread of influenza explains the discrepancy between the planned and actual numbers of beneficiaries.

The project did not cover all schools in the target regions, but prioritized those in the most food insecure areas within these regions which were characterised by high levels of unemployment and food insecure populations. To identify the schools, WFP worked in close collaboration with regional authorities and in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science.

Through a complementary Food Assistance-for-Asset (FFA) component, WFP enabled the schools to hire kitchen helpers who were indispensable for project implementation. These were exclusively women of varying ages who had been unemployed and were lacking the necessary skills required to access the regular labour market. As incentive for their labour, the kitchen helpers were provided with an entitlement sufficient to meet the daily food requirements of a family of five for the number of days they worked. The entitlement comprised 2.5 kg of wheat flour, 150 g of fortified vegetable oil and 150 g of pulses. The reimbursement through food assistance attracted only those unable to compete in the regular labour market due to lacking skills and knowledge.

During the first half of the year, the project was implemented in two modalities: hot meals with daily baked bread in 650 schools and fruit bars in 50 schools. However, at the end of the school year, WFP decided to discontinue the fruit bar modality and totally shift the modality to hot meals under the WFP administered project. This decision was taken following monitoring findings which revealed that up to 70 percent of children refused to eat the fruit bars, while a further 20 percent left them half-eaten, wasting an expensive product and not contributing to the

achievement of the project's objectives. The fruit bar modality had been put in place as an interim solution for the schools which did not have the minimum facilities required for the provision of hot meals until they could upgrade their facilities. Discontinuing this modality, WFP continued to extensively encourage the schools to upgrade their facilities with at least simple repair works during the three months of summer vacation enabling them to provide school meals using the hot feeding modality in the new school year, beginning in September 2015.

School meals were provided to the children 5 days a week over the 166 days of the school year: meals and fruit bars provided 700 kcal and 375 kcal per child per day respectively out of the average daily need of 1,250 kcal required for a full-day of primary school. The entitlement for hot feeding provided by WFP consisted of fortified wheat flour and vegetable oil as well as pulses, rice, buckwheat and pasta. Through their daily involvement, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) ensured mobilization of parent and community support to the project as a result of which the school meals were diversified with seasonal vegetables and fruit.

Beneficiary Category	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total Beneficiaries	37,750	37,750	75,500	36,410	32,134	68,544	96.5%	85.1%	90.8%
By Age-group:									
Children (under 5 years)	1,057	1,057	2,114	850	850	1,700	80.4%	80.4%	80.4%
Children (5-18 years)	33,220	33,220	66,440	32,407	28,535	60,942	97.6%	85.9%	91.7%
Adults (18 years plus)	3,473	3,473	6,946	3,153	2,749	5,902	90.8%	79.2%	85.0%
By Residence status:									
Residents	37,750	37,750	75,500	36,397	32,147	68,544	96.4%	85.2%	90.8%

Activity	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total
School Feeding (on-site)	67,000	-	67,000	60,454	-	60,454	90.2%	-	90.2%
Food-Assistance-for-Assets	8,500	-	8,500	8,090	-	8,090	95.2%	-	95.2%

Beneficiary Category	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
School Feeding (on-site)									
Children receiving school meals in primary schools	33,500	33,500	67,000	32,040	28,414	60,454	95.6%	84.8%	90.2%
Total participants	33,500	33,500	67,000	32,040	28,414	60,454	95.6%	84.8%	90.2%
Total beneficiaries	33,500	33,500	67,000	32,040	28,414	60,454	95.6%	84.8%	90.2%
Food-Assistance-for-Assets									
Activity supporters	-	1,700	1,700	-	1,618	1,618	-	95.2%	95.2%
Total participants	-	1,700	1,700	-	1,618	1,618	-	95.2%	95.2%
Total beneficiaries	4,250	4,250	8,500	4,368	3,722	8,090	102.8%	87.6%	95.2%

The total number of beneficiaries includes all targeted persons who were provided with WFP food/cash/vouchers during the reporting period - either as a recipient/participant or from a household food ration distributed to one of these recipients/participants.

Commodity	Planned Distribution (mt)	Actual Distribution (mt)	% Actual v. Planned
Buckwheat	108	96	89.2%
Lentils	208	-	-
Pasta	108	91	84.5%
Rice	108	99	91.2%
Split Peas	-	215	-
Vegetable Oil	154	134	87.1%
Wheat Flour	2,197	2,041	92.9%
Total	2,883	2,676	92.8%

Story Worth Telling

The school headmaster Zohrab Maghakyan in Amberd Village in Armavir province is young, motivated and believes that hard work always pays-off. Contextual difficulties in this rural part of Armenia did not prevent him from developing his vision for Amberd school. When WFP launched a school meals project in the school in 2014, Zohrab had the idea to cultivate a hectare of land near the school to grow grapes, peaches and apricots, fruits which are locally available and easily grown.

"To improve our children's nutrition I thought of complementing the school meals using produce from our school garden," Zohrab said.

His visionary mindset did not stop there. This year the school reached a production surplus of 4 mt of apricots, which he traded with local farmers in exchange for 800 kg of potatoes for school feeding.

"My next plan is to bring several pigs and some chickens," explains Zohrab. The food basket consisting of wheat flour, rice, lentils, oil, pasta and buckwheat could then occasionally be complemented with meat and eggs, through the nutrition value chain provided by the school. Together with volunteer students from the higher grades, Zohrab has initiated furniture-making and renovation works in the classrooms and cafeteria, improving the school infrastructure to be more child-friendly, helping to shape work-related attitudes and learning skills of students.

"I like to come to school, to eat tasty meals and spend more time doing extracurricular activities," said 10 year-old Armine.

The provision of school meals in Armavir has become a catalyst for boosting the agricultural production and improving dietary diversity through value creation. The school in Amberd is becoming a showcase model for other schools in the province and in 2016 WFP plans to organize teacher study visits to the school to promote an exchange of knowledge and lessons learned, which will help generate innovative ideas in other schools.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

Armenia has scored consistently highly in relation to parameters such as equal access to education for males and females and positive health outcomes for women. However, according to an Asian Development Bank Gender Assessment, under-representation of women in politics still continues and there has been a decline in access to economic opportunities for women putting them at a higher risk of falling into poverty.

Education enrollment figures show that females tend to stay in education for a greater number of years, up to the level of postgraduate education, compared to their male counterparts. Integrating gender issues into the educational system has been articulated as a priority area for the government, but implementation needs to be strengthened. Despite women's high level of educational attainment, this has not resulted in commensurate gains in labour force participation by women and a significant gender wage gap persists in Armenia.

WFP's project provided an additional opportunity for women to be involved in decision making and implementation. It included female school head teachers, and the participation of women in PTAs and as kitchen helpers, which were represented almost exclusively by women.

Women represented over half the number of school head-teachers and played a significant role in the project, ensuring coordination between schools and local and regional authorities.

Women represented the majority membership of PTAs and were involved in resource mobilization, engaging regularly with their communities. They participated in the planning and monitoring of the daily preparation of meals in schools. The small number of men in PTAs is explained by the traditional division of roles within the family in Armenia where women tend to have greater responsibility for children's education. In addition, limited employment opportunities have contributed to a great number of men migrating to find jobs and remaining separated from their families for most of the year. Men were engaged in project activities which required hard manual labour such as the repair of kitchen facilities and furniture, fixing broken water pipes, splitting firewood, loading and unloading food items and cultivating school gardens. The involvement of men in PTAs and overall support to school feeding activities increased over time due to WFP's advocacy efforts.

The opportunity for some women to work as kitchen helpers increased their confidence and self-esteem. They were able to realize their greater potential outside their homes and to contribute to the food security of their households. They witnessed the benefits of school feeding on the education and health of children, including their own. Parent and teacher participation had a visible impact on the accountability and transparency of school feeding activities.

On a day-to-day basis, boys and girls sat and ate at the same table, which contributed to their interaction and created an atmosphere of companionship outside the classroom. This is regarded as vital in terms of promoting equality from the perspective of gender relationships amongst children. The school feeding project in Armenia is contributing to increased awareness in the society and changes of attitudes and behaviours in order to promote greater gender equality.

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees				
<i>ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12</i>	>60.00	90.00		92.00
Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash, or voucher distribution				
<i>ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12</i>	>60.00	85.00		87.00

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

No safety incidents related to project beneficiaries were reported during 2015. A weather-related incident was reported in Aragotsotn province where a severe windstorm damaged the roofs of 3 schools. With support from several NGOs and the active involvement of parents, the government immediately made the necessary repairs making it possible for the schools to resume classes after only a few days and for WFP to continue regular provision of assistance. Together with the province authorities, WFP visited the schools and supported the resumption of the school feeding activities without any further delay.

WFP was committed to ensuring the transparency of its assistance to beneficiaries, and ready to receive both positive and negative feedback from direct and indirect beneficiaries in order to take corrective action or improve implementation. Leaflets containing contact information for WFP and for field monitors were posted in visible places in all schools. To strengthen the reporting and referral mechanisms of the programme, the hotline established last year continued to be functional. However during 2015 only 4 calls were received through the confidential hotline with callers questioning the parents' cash contributions as the Minister of Education and Science had prohibited such contributions. WFP explained to them that the Ministry of Education had specified that cash contributions exclusively for school feeding were allowed to improve the children's diet with complementary food items, and would be spent exclusively by the PTAs and controlled by the school headmasters based on invoices presented to the school headmasters. The callers were satisfied with the responses provided.

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of assisted people (men) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00
Proportion of assisted people (men) who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme site				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00
Proportion of assisted people (women) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00
Proportion of assisted people (women) who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme sites				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00
Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2015.01 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00
Proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme site				
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Base value: 2014.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00		100.00

Outputs

WFP continued providing technical assistance to the government through its technical cooperating partner, SIFI. WFP and SIFI helped the government to develop the school feeding national programme for Ararat Province following those for two other provinces that were handed over to the government in September 2014.

The number of schools supported by WFP was less than planned as they lacked proper conditions for hot meals. School feeding was provided to the children five days a week over the 166 days of the school year through either hot meals or fruit bars. The entitlement for hot meals provided by WFP consisted of fortified wheat flour and vegetable oil as well as pulses, rice, buckwheat and pasta. Meals and fruit bars were provided to the children five days a week with consumption of kilocalories close to planned. Parent contributions complemented the energy content and nutrition value of the daily meals.

The number of school days was lower than planned due to flu pandemic which resulted in schools being closed for additional two weeks after the spring break.

To strengthen capacity under the national project enabling the shift from the provision of biscuits and juice to hot meals, WFP and SIFI refined the results of an earlier conducted needs assessment for basic kitchen equipment. Based on these results, WFP provided 1,146 units of kitchen equipment (ovens, refrigerators, gas stoves, water heaters) to 262 schools as planned. The provision of such equipment was a critical factor enabling the shift to hot meals in half of the schools in the 2015-16 school year compared to none in the previous one.

Throughout 2015, WFP promoted the creation of school gardens for complementary inputs or children's learning. According to WFP estimations based on monitoring data in the first half of the year, close to the number of planned rural schools had agricultural land to serve these purposes. Consistent work with school headmasters and communities during the second half of the year, resulted in the establishment or revitalization of existing school

gardens. These revitalized gardens, which almost reached the number planned, were used for learning purposes but also generated complementary food as well as income for the schools. WFP witnessed that greater impact and longer sustainability could be achieved if school gardens were part of the school feeding programme especially when engaging parents and communities.

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO3: School Feeding (on-site)				
Monetary value of food commodities purchased locally by WFP (US\$)	US\$	112,000	74,031	66.1
SO4: Capacity Development - Emergency Preparedness				
Number of contingency plans created	contingency plan	1	1	100.0
SO4: Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities				
Number of national programmes developed with WFP support (school feeding)	national programme	1	1	100.0
Number of technical assistance projects conducted by WFP to strengthen the national capacity	project	1	1	100.0
SO4: School Feeding (on-site)				
Energy content of food distributed (kcal/person/day)	individual	700	688	98.3
Government contributions to WFP for technical assistance and capacity development support (USD)	US\$	171,000	104,000	60.8
Number of WFP-assisted schools that have school gardens for learning or complementary food input	school	300	265	88.3
Number of feeding days	instance	180	166	92.2
Number of national programmes developed with WFP support (school feeding)	national programme	1	1	100.0
Number of schools assisted by WFP	school	700	637	91.0
Number of schools with revitalised school gardens	school	100	96	96.0
WFP expenditures for technical assistance to strengthen national capacity	US\$	425,000	403,000	94.8

Outcomes

WFP's support to education and investments in policy support through technical assistance from SIFI ensured that the school meals programme remained high on the national agenda.

Locally produced and procured dried fruit was used in the production of high energy fruit bars provided to children. Greater procurement volume was noted in 2015 in comparison to 2014, although the fruit bar production was discontinued and replaced with hot meals.

Despite a deteriorating socio-economic situation in the past year combined with high rates of migration, enrollment and attendance rates in WFP assisted schools remained very high for both boys and girls, demonstrating their equal participation in education. In 2015, for the first time WFP introduced two new indicators, enrollment as the annual rate of change and the pass rate, therefore no previous follow-up values are available for this school year. Through a WFP conducted online survey, slightly more than half of school headmasters confirmed that implementation of the

school meals programme has improved children's health, that there have been reportedly less incidence of illness among children, and subsequently more regular school attendance. The survey further showed that almost half of children attend school without eating breakfast. WFP beneficiary interviews indicated that by providing meals to children at school, the burden on households was reduced and families were enabled to use their resources for other food items or for household investments such as livestock farming, agriculture or small-scale family business, thereby preventing negative coping strategies.

The school meals programme contributed to lower drop-out rates and to sound pass rates for both girls and boys, exceeding the targets under this indicator.

Along with the WFP administered school meals project in seven provinces, national pilots ran in a further three provinces. The School Meals National Capacity Index (NCI) remained at the same level as last year. The main contributor to the NCI score is strong community participation with complementary inputs enhancing the programme, while the institutional framework needs further improvement. WFP began the preparations to conduct a Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) workshop to identify the strengths and gaps in school feeding related policies, institutions and systems and to plan for future actions. Based on the results of the exercise, WFP will report on the NCI using a new baseline.

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
SO3 Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs				
Increased marketing opportunities for producers and traders of agricultural products and food at the regional, national and local levels				
Food purchased from regional, national and local suppliers, as % of food distributed by WFP in-country				
<i>ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS Access database , Previous Follow-up: 2014.01 WFP programme monitoring Distribution data , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 WFP programme monitoring Distribution data</i>	=25.00		4.00	3.00
SO4 Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger				
Increased equitable access to and utilization of education				
Enrolment: Average annual rate of change in number of children enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 NSS, WB, UNICEF , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data NSS, WB</i>	=3.00		-	3.00
Enrolment (girls): Average annual rate of change in number of girls enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring</i>	=3.00		-	2.70
Enrolment (boys): Average annual rate of change in number of boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring</i>	=3.00		-	3.00
Attendance rate in WFP-assisted primary schools				
<i>ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 School headmasters , Base value: 2008.12 Secondary data UN DATA. UNICEF_SOWC-Special edition on Children rights , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 WFP programme monitoring School headmasters survey , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 WFP programme monitoring School headmasters survey</i>	=100.00	96.25	96.38	96.27

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Attendance rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Base value: 2008.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring	=100.00	96.19	96.36	96.08
Attendance rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Base value: 2008.12 Secondary data UN DATA. UNICEF_SOWC-Special edition on Children rights , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 WFP programme monitoring KI interviews , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 WFP programme monitoring KI interviews	=100.00	96.28	96.38	96.80
Drop-out rate in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 NSS, WB data , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data NSS, WB data	=0.00		-	1.45
Drop-out rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Base value: 2013.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring	=0.00	1.45	1.46	1.45
Drop-out rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Base value: 2013.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring	=0.00	1.44	1.45	1.44
Pass rate in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 WFP programme monitoring KI interviews	>70.00		-	98.75
Pass rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring	>70.00		-	98.70
Pass rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data WFP monitoring	>70.00		-	98.90
Ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce undernutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community levels				
NCI: School Feeding National Capacity Index				
ARMENIA , Project End Target: 2017.06 MS access database , Base value: 2012.12 WFP programme monitoring MS access database , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 WFP programme monitoring Interviews, KI discussions	=9.00	9.00	-	9.00

Sustainability, Capacity Development and Handover

As a result of WFP's consistent advocacy efforts and engagement with the Ministry of Education and the School Feeding Inter-ministerial Committee, school feeding was included in the national education sector strategies of Armenia's 2016-2025 Education Development Programme showing the government's firm commitment to continued

implementation of the national programme. Furthermore, the school meals programme was increasingly acknowledged as an effective social safety net by the government, international financial institutions and other United Nations Agencies.

With support from WFP and SIFI, the Ministry of Education developed the 2016 National Action Plan aligning it with the recommendations of an independent operation evaluation in February 2015. The total government budget allocation for school feeding in all three provinces was USD 2.7 million covering 263 schools with 22,100 students from 2014-2016. In 2015, the government informed WFP of its intention to take-over the school meals programme in one more province in 2017 and in an additional province every year thereafter.

WFP reactivated the work of the school meals inter-ministerial committee with the participation of five ministries and advocated for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to become an active member of the committee. WFP strengthened consultations and decisions to increase national interest and ownership of the programme. WFP's strong advocacy with central and regional authorities and headmasters resulted in greater understanding of the government on the importance of hot meals compared to dry feeding. Furthermore the government improved conditions of school kitchens to be able to cook the healthier hot meals.

WFP, together with SIFI played a vital role in school feeding national policy matters at central level and knowledge transfer to the government at the regional and local levels, contributing to the gradual handover. Through four consultative workshops in Vayots Dzor and Syunik provinces, school headmasters and representatives of local authorities developed knowledge and a greater understanding of the project. WFP established demonstration schools encouraging sharing of best practices on the various aspects of implementation, including on the storage of food commodities, increasing the role of PTAs for complementary resource mobilization and on best practices for daily implementation. Follow-up monitoring indicated improved capacity and performance for the storage of food stock in schools, and more community inputs pointed to the increasing trust in the project. Equipped with knowledge and clarity on implementation, many school headmasters who initially showed reluctance or resistance to implementing school meals changed their attitude and revealed readiness for project ownership.

More active involvement of parent councils was noted in the project. Parents' visits to schools became more frequent, keeping children's needs in focus and strengthening parent-school relations. Their closer ties with the project resulted in improved community contributions, which enabled the purchase of additional food items such as meat once or twice a month, and for the purchase of complementary non-food items. Communities contributed with cash, food and voluntary work contributing to better implementation of school meals.

Contributing to the sustainability of the project, school gardens cultivated with support from parents and the wider community, complemented the children's diets with vegetables and fruit, enriching and diversifying school meals.

Inputs

Resource Inputs

The project was fully funded in 2015. The project had a single donor, which generously provided a multi-year contribution. The benefits of such funding included timely implementation of the programme and balanced activities at all levels, including the schools. Multi-year support enabled effective government capacity development and planning for an incremental handover in line with the country context and evidence of increased capacity over time.

The government continued to cover the internal transport, storage and handling costs demonstrating their interest in school feeding.

Donor	2015 Resourced (mt)		2015 Shipped/Purchased (mt)
	In-Kind	Cash	
Russian Federation	0	2,283	0
Total	0	2,283	0

See Annex: Resource Inputs from Donors for breakdown by commodity and contribution reference number

Food Purchases and In-Kind Receipts

Most of the food was purchased internationally in the donor country. The only exception was dried fruit, which was purchased locally for the production of fruit bars by a local Armenian company.

Commodities	Local (mt)	Developing Country (mt)	Other International (mt)	GCMF (mt)
Buckwheat	0	0	206	0
Pasta	0	0	40	0
Rice	0	0	120	0
Split Peas	0	0	219	0
Vegetable Oil	0	0	196	0
Wheat Flour	0	0	2,232	0
Total	0	0	3,013	0

Food Transport, Delivery and Handling

The donor delivered the food commodities to the warehouse in the town of Vanadzor in central Armenia, on delivery-at place terms. Food transportation, delivery and handling were carried out by a private trucking company, selected through a WFP competitive process, whose services were provided in a timely manner.

Post-Delivery Losses

Minimal post-delivery losses occurred under the project. This success can be attributed mainly to the efficient regular monitoring visits undertaken by WFP monitors, with every school visited three times a year, imposing quality controls on storage conditions and commodity handling.

Management

Partnerships

The school meals project developed and expanded its strategic and operational partnerships, not only with the government and the United Nations agencies, but also with international financial Institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank. WFP continued partnering with SIFI, local authorities and communities at the implementation level, placing greater emphasis on the development of strategies, which led to a more sustainable and nationally-owned approach to school meals.

Established to coordinate and advise on the implementation of the project, the inter-ministerial committee comprised representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations. The committee discussed particular programmatic issues and challenges, the future strategy and related policy issues that needed to be put in place. Furthermore, it informed decision making processes for the gradual handover and implementation of the sustainable national school meals programme. There are encouraging indications of enhanced interest among partners around home-grown school meals and its integration as a safety net within the social protection system.

Hired by WFP for its international expertise in improving public food services, SIFI continued to support the process of improving the quality of the national school meals programme and handover of school meals activities to the government. SIFI provided technical assistance to WFP, supported capacity assessment and gap analysis and advised on improvement for the national school meals programme. Both WFP and SIFI systematically monitored progress toward capacity building in order to understand how the related efforts had improved capacity and contributed to the government's ability to perform programme functions independently of WFP.

WFP acted as a catalyst to boost potential synergies to maximize the impact of the project. WFP successfully partnered with the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development project (ENPARD) which aimed to link farmers' groups to school meals, providing a sustainable market for local producers. WFP intends to purchase locally produced buckwheat for school meals with support from ENPARD's first phase of operation. In partnership with UNICEF, WFP will conduct a comprehensive food security, vulnerability and nutrition analysis, the results of which will inform the government's food and nutrition policies and evidence-based WFP programming. Together with UNDP, WFP worked on the needs assessment of a community resilience project with the engagement of school headmasters of the WFP administered school meals project.

Partnership	NGO		Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	UN/IO
	National	International		
Total		1		10

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Latest Follow-up
Amount of complementary funds provided to the project by partners (including NGOs, civil society, private sector organizations, international financial institutions and regional development banks)		
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=150,000.00	135,597.00
Number of partner organizations that provide complementary inputs and services		
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=5.00	1.00
Proportion of project activities implemented with the engagement of complementary partners		
ARMENIA, School Feeding , Project End Target: 2017.06 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12	=100.00	100.00

Lessons Learned

An important lesson learned was to foster an incremental handover to accompany the process so that it is implemented at a pace that will ensure sustained progress and quality in line with the country context and constraints. As is stated in the February 2015 mid-term evaluation report, the first instance of project handover in September 2014 and January 2015 was done too early and expeditiously which resulted in a need for WFP to cover gaps in capacity and build support to the national school feeding programme throughout the year and possibly beyond. The transition to government ownership is a process that takes many years to complete. WFP's role from a direct implementer to an enabler is a complex and multi-layered endeavor. A hasty exit from external assistance without the adequate mechanism in place can lead either to the collapse of the national school feeding programme or its poor quality. A long-term strategy and WFP assistance is needed to increase government capacity to finance and manage the programme. WFP needs to foster the exchange of knowledge using a network of demonstration schools and accompany the hand-over process with the proper monitoring assistance even beyond the transition stage to ensure a durable quality. The school feeding programme will, therefore, continue to be supported by WFP over the next few years before the government takes over full responsibility to ensure that the knowledge and community involvement are well grounded for the transition stage.

The school feeding in Armenia has been perceived as only an education intervention mostly contributing to education benefits. School feeding is included in the National Programme for Education Development, however the social aspect of the school feeding is not included in the national social policy framework and was not understood by the government as part of the social protection system until recently. WFP increased awareness and advocated intensively for the inclusion of school feeding in the national social protection framework. WFP continued raising visibility and awareness of the project's wide range of benefits, including nutritional aspects, with communities, government agencies, the non-governmental sector, international organizations, the Armenian diaspora and the private sector.

In the area of nutrition, WFP is working on framing the collaboration with the Ministry of Health jointly with UNICEF and WHO and emphasizing nutrition education for school kitchen helpers and school headmasters under both the WFP-administered and the national school feeding programme to improve the quality of implementation of school feeding. Monitoring observations confirm lack of knowledge in healthy eating and poor meal preparation practices in the majority of schools among cooks, school headmasters and regional administrations alike. To address these gaps, WFP will work with nutritionists to develop training materials and disseminate it to various audience, and will continue providing kitchen equipment.

Operational Statistics

Annex: Participants by Activity and Modality

Activity	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total
School Feeding (on-site)	67,000	-	67,000	60,454	-	60,454	90.2%	-	90.2%
Food-Assistance-for-Assets	1,700	-	1,700	1,618	-	1,618	95.2%	-	95.2%

Annex: Resource Inputs from Donors

Donor	Cont. Ref. No.	Commodity	Resourced in 2015 (mt)		Shipped/Purchased in 2015 (mt)
			In-Kind	Cash	
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Buckwheat	0	100	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Pasta	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Rice	0	80	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Split Peas	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Vegetable Oil	0	90	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00032-01	Wheat Flour	0	405	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00033-01	Buckwheat	0	0	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00033-01	Split Peas	0	0	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00033-01	Vegetable Oil	0	0	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00033-01	Wheat Flour	0	0	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00034-01	Wheat Flour	0	0	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Buckwheat	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Pasta	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Rice	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Split Peas	0	220	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Vegetable Oil	0	40	0
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00040-01	Wheat Flour	0	1,148	0
Total			0	2,283	0